M/s. Sumitomo Corporation. Government of India has given counter guarantee for this supply. No central assistance is necessary for this purpose in view of the above facts.

(d) Does not arise.

Corporatisation of Major Ports

*239 SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to corporatise all the 11 major ports to world standard;

(b) if so, the names of such ports; and

(c) by what time this plan would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH): (a) and (b) A decision has been taken for phased corporatization of existing Major Ports starting with the new Major Port at Ennore followed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Haldia Ports.

(c) No time schedule has been prescribed for implementation of the plan.

Delay in repayment of excess Tax paid by assessees

*240 SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is enormous delay by income tax authorities to repay the excess tax paid by the assessees;

(b) if so, the number of such cases and the period since when these cases are pending alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to clear such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) All possible efforts are made for early and prompt disposal of refund claims. Government has consistently been impressing upon the Chief Commissioners of Income tax the need for taking effective steps for elimination of delay in this matter. However, the assessing officers who process the refund claims manually, need some time to process

the refund claims depending upon various factors namely, workload, available manpower, time taken for verification of payment challans etc. Because of these reasons there is some time lag between the date of filing of return and the date of issuance of refund. In some cases refunds are delayed because there is a deficiency in the return because of which refund cannot be issued unless the deficiency is rectified by the assessee. The details regarding claims for refunds disposed off and the balance outstanding for the period 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 (upto June, 1999) are as follows:—

Financial year	No. of claims disposed off	Balance outstanding
1996-97	1,57,065	54,651
1997-98	1,82,484	76,616
1998-99	1,47,672	1,00,498
1999-2000 (upto June, 1999)	42,020	1,32,031

(c) The Government has taken a number of short-term and long-term measures for the expeditious disposal of refunds by initiating computerisation in the department, starting electronic clearing services, taking policy initiative to reduce the number of direct refund claims and also issuing instructions for time-bound disposal of all pending refunds.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Restructuring of Indian Airlines

1223. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:—

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have announced a financial restructuring package of Rs. 325 crores for Indian Airlines for its revival;

(b) whether it is a fact that this financial package is linked to fleet expansion; and